THE

DANGER

Of IMPROVING

PHYSICK, &c.

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THE DANGER Of IMPROVING PHYSICK:

With a Brief

ACCOUNT

Of the Present

Epidemick FEVER.

Sed aliqui ſunt qui ex eo, quod ignorant, non parum lucri faciunt. THO. LINACRE.

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THE DANGER Of IMPROVING PHYSICK, &c.

IT is a ſeeming Paradox, *that a Phyſician, who improves his Profeſſion* (the Practical *Part of it eſpecially*) *ſhould hazard his Reputation by ſuch Improvements*; for what ought People more earneſtly to deſire, than that the Guardians of their Health ſhould be governed by certain and obvious Rules? A Phyſician who hath enabled himſelf, by great Learning and Induſtry, to remove prevailing Errors, and convert Doubts into evident Truths, is juſtly intitled to the utmoſt eſteem of the People, and a Confidence in him; ſince one falſe ſtep, often cloſes the Eyes of the

ſick, and hurries them headlong into their Graves.

WHEREAS, on the contrary, Experience ſhews us that Phyſicians, who have been the moſt ſucceſsful in their Endeavours to diſpel this Darkneſs, and chalk out plain, though untrodden Paths, unavoidably expoſe themſelves to Calumny and Reproach; by which means their Diſcoveries are often diſcredited, and Mankind is deprived of the Benefit, which they would otherwiſe receive from them.

IT is, no doubt, the Intereſt of thoſe Pretenders to Phyſick, who make a Trade of their Profeſſion, to guard againſt that Veneration, which People naturally conceive for thoſe, who eſtabliſh a perfect Practice, or give us more familiar Notions of the Nature of Diſeaſes; for as theſe Conſpirators againſt Mankind, have generally no Capacity to apprehend ſuch *Diſcoveries* themſelves, their chief Fear is, that the People ſhould reſort to the *Diſcoverers*, and intruſt them with the Care of their Health. It is therefore very manifeſt, that *learned Phyſicians* will always be ſubject to the Calumny of theſe Men, as the greateſt Obſtructors of their Traffick and Gains.

THE Truth is, that we live in an Age, in which *Monopolies* and *Cabals* are generally condemn'd, and yet as generally encouraged.

couraged. Men, who despair of succeeding in their respective Professions, by fair and honest Means, have found out a Trick of associating themselves into *Factions*, and often obtain that by *Numbers*, which they could never have acquired by *personal Merit* or *Capacity*. The great Mischief of these *Combinations* is, that the most *able* and *useful* Members of Society, commonly fall a Sacrifice to them, and the Publick suffers for the sake of a *few ignorant Engrossers*.

THESE Arts have long been complained of in *Mercantile* and *Political* Affairs. They are still more unwarrantable in the *Liberal Sciences*, which will always decline under *partial Restraints* and *Discouragements*; but of all the Liberal Sciences, they are most ridiculous in the Profession of *Medicine*, which relates to the Health and Lives of Mankind. The whole Merit of a Physician consists in his exact Knowledge of the animal OEconomy; his Penetration into the secret Causes of Diseases; his Sagacity in distinguishing them under all their various Symptoms; and his Judgment in administring the most proper Remedies. These are Qualifications, which require great Study, long Experience, and nice Observation; but what Encouragement is there for any Gentlemen to put themselves to all this Trouble, when they find that it will do them more Mischief than Service; and that a Reputa-

tion in *Physick* is to be obtained only, like a *Place at Court*, by servile Attendance on a *great*, *overgrown Practitioner*, who both raised himself to the Head of his Profession by *mean Arts*, and is supported in it by others, with the *same Views*.

For this Reason the Faculty of *Physick* can never flourish, nor the Practice of it be improved, under *Cabals*, *Factions*, and *Confederacies*. There ought to be no *Prime-Minister* in this Profession, who hath a Power to raise or depress whom he pleases, and engross the Lives of the whole Town into his own Hands.

And yet, these *trading*, *exclusive Companies in Physick*, have often proved very successful in their Impositions on the World, and done great Prejudice to the *most learned Professors* of that Art; but when their Blunders have been discover'd, they have been despised and deserted by the very Persons, who adored them before. The worst Consequence is, that such Discoveries leave a Blemish on the *Profession itself*; for when the People have been often deluded in this Manner, and, like *Noah's Dove*, don't know where to fix their Choice; they are apt to conclude, that *Physick* is only a *crafty Invention* to cheat them out of their Money, and that the *Professors* of it are little better than *Impostors*.

It would be easy to prove, that the present Decay of *Physick*, in it's Honour and Esteem with the World, is almost entirely owing to the Arrogance and Insufficiency of these *Cabals*, however able they may have proved in deceiving the World for some Time; and that People place all *Dispensers of Physick* on the same Level, when the Weakness of several *Combinations* hath been discovered; but as this is not my present Purpose, I shall proceed to evince the Truth of my former Assertion, *that the most* learned Physicians *are always most subject to Obloquy, on account of their superiour Knowledge and Discoveries.*

For a Proof of this, we could have recourse to a multitude of Instances; but we chuse to confine ourselves at present, to the late Dr *Freind's History of Physick*, which was evidently calculated to serve his own Purposes, by flattering *those* whom he designed to betray.

Dr *Freind* was, doubtless, more learned than the Leaders of any *Cabal* in our time; but so far had the Corruption of imposing upon Mankind prevailed, that he had little hopes, perhaps, of destroying such *wicked Societies*, but by their own Arts, and their own Tools. His first Performances might have given reasonable Expectations of his Abilities; but as he found such honest Endeavours at a Reputation were rather hurt-

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ful than beneficial to him, he changed hands and gave the World a *History of Physick*, which the Majority of Physicians thought learned, and thought it was the Produce of many Years; yet by the artful manner of publishing it, he drew in the Faculty to approve it, without considering the End of his Scheme. The *Doctor* assures us roundly, that the Physicians of the present Age were grossly ignorant, and that they had not any Notion of the State of Physick. *Hippocrates*, we are told, taught his Followers, that Physick required Length of Time to acquire it, and that a Man's Life was too short for the Acquisition; whereas the present Physicians had inverted the Wisdom of the *Aphorism*, by their Belief of the Easiness of the Acquisition, and that a Man's Life was more than enough to be Master of the Healing Art. Nor is the Knowledge of these Physicians more than their Power of Curing: for Dr *Freind* again assures us, that our Physicians know so little of Practice, that they have abridg'd the *Materia Medica*, and that they had scarcely Tools against any Disease.

SOME few indeed of a distinguish'd Character in their Profession own it, as we are told, *to a Sagacity in seeing through the Foibles of humane Nature, whereby they could form a good Judgment how far Mankind could be imposed upon, and never failed*

to

to make an Advantage of their Credulity. The Author of the *Hiſtory* takes care to point out ſome whom he deſigned to comprehend in this honourable Account; but I will only obſerve, on this occaſion, that as the Majority of Phyſicians are *ignorant*, ſo the ſmall Remainder are *Knaves* in Dr *Freind*'s Opinion. The Counterpart of this Account is the Character of the Doctor himſelf, drawn by his own impartial Hand; who is *Maſter of the Knowledge of all former Phyſicians*, and has equally copied after their *Virtue*, as well as their *Learning*. He, with great *Judgment*, has fathom'd the Depth of their *Knowledge*; and has particularly regulated all the Actions of his Life, like the Mahometan *Avenzoar*, with a conſtant View to the World to come. Men muſt then be depriv'd of Sight, if ſuch great Merits could poſſibly be overlook'd; eſpecially when the Knowledge of Phyſick centers ſo plainly in this *conſcientious Doctor*.

Dr *Mead* (in appearance, the great Friend of the *Hiſtorian*; and who was often call'd upon for a Voucher, when Argument and Hiſtory fail'd him) eaſily diſcover'd his own *Foible*, and ſuffered more by the Unfaithfulneſs of his Ally, than the ignorant, and far more than the cunning Phyſicians formerly mentioned. A reſtleſs Deſire of being eſteemed a Perſon of *Learning*, which he

he would have purchaſed at any expence, ſo blinded the Doctor, full of popular Fame, that he could not diſcern the Bait which was laid for his Vanity. Had either the Character of a *Learned Phyſician*, given in the *Hiſtory*, been conſider'd, or even the weak Defence made of his Book, about the *Plague*, been underſtood, it had been obvious that the Character of *Linacre*, by no means fitted Dr *Mead*; he never having been eminent for his writing in *Greek* or *Latin*, or for his employing theſe Languages upon *Galen* or *Hippocrates*, as *Linacre* the firſt *Engliſh* Phyſician, and *Freind* the laſt, had done: yet theſe are the Qualifications laid in the *Hiſtory*, and which *Mead* took to himſelf. As to the Book of the *Plague*, it was leſs defended than if no Attempt of that kind had been made. As *ill got Fame* gives the like Satisfaction as *ill got Riches*, Dr *Mead* was ſo far ingenuous, as to deſire a better Title than that he held for his *diſtinguiſhed Learning*; and was under the greateſt Uneaſineſs upon the Account of any Drawback made on that Poſſeſſion.

The Character of *Learning* in a Phyſician was, in this particular, made ſubſervient to Views of private Intereſt; but is far more glorious in one, that would live with the lateſt Poſterity: for a *good Name is better than great Riches*; and as *Freind* was ambitious of a laſting Fame, ſo we find two contem-

contemporary Phyſicians in the Hiſtory, who he thought much obſcur'd his Luſtre; and are the two whom, he attacks with inordinate Fervency, and whoſe Reputation he endeavours, with the greateſt Labour, to deſtroy, even in Contradiction to himſelf.

As the mentioned Phyſicians have defended themſelves againſt the Miſrepreſentations of Dr *Freind*, and as I am to make no further Uſe of their Controverſy, than what ſerves the purpoſe of my preſent Argument, I may take the liberty for once to name the Doctor's Adverſaries. At home we have Dr *Cockburn*, and abroad the learned Dr *le Clerc*: the firſt as well eſteemed abroad, as the laſt is among the learned in *England*. We are no ſtrangers to the great Friendſhip our *domeſtick Adverſaries*, cultivated for twenty years; 'till the following Abuſes, merely to eſtabliſh a ſuperior Character for *Learning*, render'd Dr *Freind* inſupportable to a Perſon, who had any regard to his Reputation, or had the means to ſupport it. In the firſt, and one of the beſt of his Books, * the Doctor aſſures his Reader, that Dr *Cockburn* was moſt knowing in the *Animal OEconomy*; which is the *Rationale* of *Anatomy*, and is truly the *Baſis* of Phyſick; ſince in

* Emmenalog. p. 51.

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it are laid the Principles for demonſtrating the Nature of *Diſeaſes*, in the ſame manner that *Euclid's Elements* are the Principles of *Geometry*.

FOR the like Reaſon that Dr *Cockburn* became obnoxious to Dr *Friend* as his Rival in *phyſical Knowledge*, Dr *le Clerc* is called upon to diſpute which of them are the beſt *Writers of Phyſick Hiſtory*. Dr *Freind* acknowledges that Dr *le Clerc* has writ the Hiſtory of Phyſick, *beginning with* HIPPOCRATES *and ending with* GALEN, *ſo accurately, that we find amply and clearly repreſented all the* Philoſophy, *the* Theory, *and* Practice *of ancient Phyſicians; ſo that there is ſcarce a Notion, a Diſtemper, a Medicine, or even the Name of an Author, to be met with amongſt them, of which he has not given a full and exact Account.*

This Character of *le Clerc*'s Hiſtory is every where agreed to; but for this Reaſon it qualifies him for the Attacks of Dr *Freind*; who, ſpeaking of the *Eſſay* for continuing it, charges it with being *a very imperfect and ſuperficial Performance; in many Particulars inaccurate and erroneous.* But Dr *le Clerc* ſo far deſpiſes the Reflexions on his *Plan*, that he would not have defended himſelf againſt them, if Dr *Freind* had not charged him with more Faults than he was truly guilty of; and in his Defence candidly confeſſes a few *chronological Errors*, which he happen'd

happen'd to fall into, by trusting too much to a very good Historian; but, at the same time he shows many Mistakes, and wilful Misrepresentations of his Adversary. From all this Transaction it is evident, that the Design of Dr *Freind's History of Physick*, was chiefly to establish to himself a Character of a superiour Knowledge in Physick, and greater Abilities for writing Physick-History; and fully *proves the Danger that commonly attends those, who endeavour to improve their Profession, and even those, who skilfully write the History of such Improvements.*

THE Superiority of Knowledge is claimed in a very easy Manner, that is perfectly well accommodated to Dr *Freind's* Genius. Has his Adversary contrived useful Medicines, but has he made a Secret of any? why then he's a *Quack*. But if he has communicated a Medicine, more effectual for the Distemper it is to remedy; he is a *Plagiary*, and has stolen it from some other Physician. Has his *Adversary* given a *Method* for administring Medicines commonly practis'd, and that have often proved fatal, with *absolute Safety?* This is a Joke, a mere Project, not worth considering. But as this Calumny is advanced with a show of Learning, I shall only remark the Doctor's manner of proving these high Charges, and how he trusts more to the Credulity of *weak Men*, without any Knowledge, than

to the Strength and Validity of his Arguments. His first Proposition, that ancient Physicians never reserved any of their Medicines a *Secret*, he thinks is evident from *Aetius*; *who*, as in the History, *collected a multitude of Receipts*; *particularly those, which had been much celebrated or used as Nostrums.* Dr *Freind* concludes from this Passage, that there were not any *Nostrums*, or secret Medicines before *Aetius*, nor in his days; tho' he assures us that this Author *collected them.* There wants surely a great stock of Credulity to be of our Historian's Opinion.

AETIUS has indeed collected a great number of Medicines, that had been *Secrets*; among others, the Doctor's favourite *Philonium*, which he thought had never been a *Nostrum*; and therefore he was better acquainted with *Aetius* than he was with *Galen*, whom he seems never to have read.

But to do justice to the Doctor, so full Satisfaction was given him, by the *Observations on his History*, that *John Baillie*, in his Letter to Dr *Freind*, or the *Doctor's* Letter to himself, at last acknowledges, that not only Ancient Physicians, but the Modern likewise had their *Arcana:* Whether he thought them *Quacks* too he does not expressly determine. We must believe there was likewise a change of Opinion in this last Article: otherwise, the great *Hippocrates*

pocrates muſt fall under the ſame Condemnation, I cannot ſay juſtly; for the *Doctor* had taken a ſtrange turn to the other Extream, even to believe *Legends*, an idle Story of *Actuarius* about an *Arcanum* of that Divine Perſon againſt the *Plague*; which muſt have been a *Noſtrum* with a witneſs; for it muſt have been concealed for no leſs time than 1700 Years.

THE *Doctor* knew which of his *Allies* he was to compliment with this general Diſcovery of *Noſtrums*, or *ſecret* Medicines. I will only obſerve, that Mankind in all Ages were equally diſſatisfied with great, ſafe, and expeditious Cures, as in our own; and I ſhall produce a Proof from *Aetius* for what I affirm. This Author, mentioning the *Ericerum*, a *Collyrium*, aſſures us, *That he had obtained the Medicine with great Trouble, and that he eſteemed it a valuable Preſent.* But he, likewiſe, adviſes Phyſicians, not to anoint with it, till they are firſt rewarded for their Cure: Men often thinking their Diſtemper ſlight, when they are quickly cured. But this Advice is out of Doors, if the Phyſicians of the preſent Age cannot diſtinguiſh one Diſeaſe from another; and that they have ſo abridged the *Materia Medica*, that they have no *Tools* for curing any, as our ingenious Hiſtorian has affirmed.

I SHALL

I SHALL conclude this Head with an Argument, in * the *Obſervations* on Dr *Freind's History of Phyſick*, againſt diſcovering *Arcana*. *The beſt natur'd Men, who have truly at heart the Good of others*, are, *in my Opinion, miſtaken; when they think ſuch Diſcoveries would very much tend to the Good of the World.* ———*The natural Conſequence, I think, would be, firſt, the Ruin of Phyſick, and afterwards the Loſs of thoſe excellent Medicines themſelves. On both which Conſiderations, the preſerving Inventions, as Secrets, is not only every Man's Right, but is highly conducing to the Honour and Preſervation of Phyſick, the greateſt Bleſſing that can happen to Men.*

THE Credulous daily ſacrifice their Lives, for the Confidence they place in their hardned Executioners; let us paſs then into another head of Calumny, contrary in its Nature to the former, but equally ſubſervient to ſerve a Friend, and to beſpatter an Enemy. The having a *ſecret* Medicine was lately the great Offence; the devulging a *Secret* is now become a greater. That is not all; the pretended Charge muſt prove ſufficient to deſtroy the Character of the whole Book, that mentions the Medicines.

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* *Pag.* 7.

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In the incomparable Performance about a *Gonorrhœa*, mention is made of an excellent *Ointment* for curing a *Shanker* that ſometimes attends it. For ſome Years this *Ointment* was a Secret, but not to Dr *Freind*, and four or five more Phyſicians; yet he reported that *Fallopius* was the firſt Preparer of it, and conſequently, that the Perſon who claimed it, pilfered a Reputation from the former. So tenacious is the Doctor, that he repeats this Calumny, which was fully anſwered, with ſome Change in the *Hiſtory* of *Phyſick*. He wiſely avoids an Appeal to *Fallopius*, but contents himſelf with making Dr *Mead* anſwer for the Truth of the *Ointment* being to be found in that Author. A vile Office put upon Dr *Mead!* and whether he would affirm againſt an obvious Fact, I do not aſſert. However, both of them laboured much to deſtroy the Character the Book had here, and all over *Europe*. One reproaches the Author for writing on a *filthy* Subject; both, that there were not three *Recipe's* in the whole Book. Dr *Freind* anticipates his Scandal 1200 Years; for it would more naturally have come into the *ſecond* Volume of his Hiſtory, where mention is made of *Fallopius*; but as that Volume was to ſee the World a Year after the *firſt*, they thought ſo long a Delay might much deſtroy the Force of the Calumny. In the Life therefore of *Aetius* he undertakes

takes a Diſcourſe about ſuppurating, and diſcuſſing of *Tumours*; and on the laſt Deſign forbids all *glutinous* and *viſcid* Medicines; and in recommending *Mercury* he thinks *Turpentine* (a Medicine every body, but the Doctor, knows to be very *viſcid*) very proper to be mixed with it, in order to render it more *diſcutient*, as *Fallopius*, he aſſures us, did; and appeals to Dr *Mead* for the Truth of his Aſſertion.

WHAT the mentioned Doctors alledge of *Fallopius* is altogether a wilful Miſrepreſentation: but if all they alledge was true, the Book of a *Gonorrhœa* may be a very excellent Performance, tho' its Author borrow'd an *Ointment* from *Fallopius*, which, unjuſtly he may claim as his own Compoſition. Here lies truly the Quarrel; the Book is good in the Senſe of every common Reader, and in the declared Opinion of ſome of the moſt unqueſtionable Judges abroad.

IF the Book may be depended upon, the Doctrine of a *Gonorrhœa* is truly *medical*, no where falling under the Conſideration, or Practice of a *Surgeon*, unleſs he is called for to apply the Ointment to a *Shanker*; the *Gonorrhœa* being the *Corruption* of a natural Liquor, which Phyſicians know beſt how to diſcharge, and to remedy all other troubleſome Symptoms, that are the conſequence of the different State of that Corruption;

ruption; and infallibly diſappear in the Progreſs of the general Cure of it. This Truth is ſo flagrant, that I challenge all the Surgeons, any where, to tell me of any Sympton, even to the forming the *Lues Venerea*, that is not the Off-ſpring of Errors in Practice, and not any diſtinct and eſſential Complaint.

In this Caſe Dr *Freind* is employing all his Learning, *i. e.* all his Eloquence in forming a ſtrong *Cabal* againſt Phyſicians; and when neither of them are able to ſupport him, nor give him a Character in his Profeſſion, Phyſick itſelf is ſurely decaying, when HE, the goodlieſt Branch of either of our famous Univerſities, muſt have recourſe to theſe Arts, even to tear the Bowels of his Mother for a Living. No body knew better than the *Doctor*, that the Phyſicians have, at all times, given the beſt Accounts of the Venereal Diſeaſe; and have contriv'd the beſt Methods of curing it, and conſequently have been the moſt ſucceſsful, as well as the moſt learned, Curers of it. Beſides, as Phyſicians know beſt upon what Views theſe Methods were invented, ſo they were not only the beſt, but the moſt common, Curers of the Diſeaſe under our preſent Conſideration.

Had Dr *Freind*, fired with a moderate Ambition of ſuperiour Knowledge, endeavoured to leſſen the ſingular Eſteem of the

Book of the *Gonorrhœa*, ſo plentifully beſtowed upon it by ſome of the beſt Judges in *Europe*, it had been far more excuſable than the forming a *Party* againſt the Author of it and all Phyſicians, and abetting it with all the Scandal and Defamation, that the moſt proſtitute Wretches can invent.

THE Perfection of any Performance often draws upon it critical Reflexions from envious Scholars; and if the practical Part of Phyſick is improved by it, there naturally attend ſuch Diſcoveries all the malicious Miſrepreſentations *Craftſmen*, who live by abuſing the People, are able to propagate. The Book of a *Gonorrhœa* is not only the moſt perfect Book of the kind, in the Opinion of the learned and famous *Dutch* Profeſſor, Dr *Boerhaave*; but of the learned and eloquent Dr *Lanciſi*, Phyſician to Pope *Clement* XI. to whoſe Induſtry we owe the moſt correct Tables of the great Anatomiſt *Bartholomæus Euſtachius*; for as they were loſt to the World one hundred Years, he not only ſaved them from deſtroying Time, but reſtored the Explanation of them, after the Original had periſhed without Retrieve. This excellent Phyſician, who has many ways obliged all Phyſicians, and enriched thoſe in *Rome* with a choſen Collection of Books in his Profeſſion, beautifully depoſited in a publick Library; this Phyſician, I ſay, being above all Envy, has candidly ac-

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knowledged the perfect Performance of the *English* Physician: adding, withal, that it was the best Model of Writing on Physick, and that it plainly shewed, that *Physicians*, hereafter, *might find from the Symptoms of any Disease, the Nature of that Disease.* The candid Physician does not scruple to congratulate the Author, and the Commonwealth of Physick, upon the Usefulness of the Discovery. The Letter is so true a *Picture* of the *Learning*, *Elegance*, and *Candour* of *Lancisi*, that I shall annex a Copy of it; which I had from an *English* Physician, in *Naples*, who kept up the Correspondence of the *Italian* and *English* Physician, by forwarding their Letters.

It is both improper and needless, on this Occasion, to quote the Opinions of other eminent *Physicians* and *Surgeons*; especially, that the Book has changed the Notions, as well as the Practice, of Physicians all over *Europe.* However it may stand with the passive Philosophy of the Author of the Book of a *Gonorrhœa* I shall not affirm; but this Usage of *Misrepresentation, Slander*, and *Defamation, ought justly to deter every Physician from producing such useful Improvements, in his Profession, as I was obliged to prove.*

The last Article of Calumny, mentioned in the *Observations* on the *History of Physick*, is quite of another kind from the

 former;

former: which, beſides common Envy, ſeem to be ſubſervient to the Intereſts of two different Parties; the laſt, altogether proceeds from the Greatneſs of the Diſcovery, and the Apprehenſions of the juſt Eſteem Men might conceive for ſo bountiful a Security to their Lives. If therefore we conſider the Diſcovery, it will be found equally to be admired for its comprehenſive Learning, and clear Inſtructions, which never could be attained by the Experience of many Ages. The Practice of *Purging*, and *Vomiting*, *Medicines* was as univerſal as the *Effects* of them were obvious: nor were they always practiſed with Safety. This long Experience of Medicines, of daily Uſe, had not inſtructed Phyſicians in a ſafe way of adminiſtring them: their *Doſes*, in Books of Phyſick, gave no Satisfaction to learned, or honeſt, Phyſicians; and theſe Books are altogether void of the *Doſes* of *Infants*, and of *Youth*, under the State of Men; as alſo of Men, in the Decline of Age. What then could more conduce to the Honour of Phyſick, the Quiet of Phyſicians, and the Safety of Men, than plain and infallible Rules, for guarding a Multitude of Lives againſt the unknown Riſque Men daily run in the Adminiſtration of ſuch uſeful Medicines. Phyſicians might be conducted by theſe Rules; which now detect their fatal Errors, chiefly occaſioned by their not attending to the former.

mer. Yet both Phyſicians and Mankind are diſobliged by the Diſcovery: for, in Town, the *firſt* are jealous of their Fame, or rather of their Gain, and make it their Buſineſs to perſwade Men of the Inſufficiency of the Diſcovery: Thus the *laſt* are betrayed by the Confidence they place in the *former*.

In 1704, when the Queſtion was put about the due *Doſes* of *Purging* and *Vomiting* Medicines, the Variety of Caſes was eſteemed infinite, and never to admit of a poſitive Determination. Some, truly great, Phyſicians honourably acknowledged their Inability for ſolving the Problem; while the Learned Members of the *Royal Academy of Sciences*, not only confeſſed the inſurmountable Difficulty of the Problem; and rightly judging, that a proper Solution extended farther, in the Practice of Phyſick, than the ſafe Adminiſtration of a *Purge*, or of a *Vomit*, deſired that the Solution might be made publick before the Expiration of the Year, the Time allotted for publiſhing it in the Philoſophical Tranſactions of the *Royal Society*.

There goes more than a common Aſſurance, to the defaming an uſeful Solution; ſo much wanted by all ingenious and learned Phyſicians, and ſo much approved and defended among our ſelves, by the late Sir *Iſaac Newton*, one of the beſt Judges that ever lived in any Age. But to juſtify the learned

learned Opinion of the Members of the Royal Academy of Sciences, I ſhall briefly obſerve ſome Particulars, in which the Truths of the Solution extend themſelves thro' the whole Practice of Phyſick. In the Demonſtration, the great Variety of Changes the Blood admits is plainly detected; here the Natural Conſtitutions of Men, and their Change in Sickneſs become obvious and manifeſt; and by the *Table* of *Doſes*, the Change of any Perſon's Conſtitution is practically ſhewn, and the Nature of the Change. Men then, far leſs diſcerning than thoſe excellent Philoſophers, muſt be convinced of the great and extenſive Uſe of the Truths ſet forth in the *Solution*.

NOTHING is more publickly affirmed, than that a right Knowledge of a ſick Perſon's Conſtitution principally conduces to the Cure of that Perſon's Sickneſs. But Phyſicians diſclaim this Knowledge, when they pretend that it only can be acquired by being converſant with particular Men: becauſe, nothing is more obvious, than that natural Conſtitutions change at ſome certain times of Life, and always in times of Sickneſs; ſo that no Familiarity can either diſcover the natural, or preternatural Change. Now as all theſe Changes are manifeſt by the Doctrine of the Solution, the ſagacious *French* Virtuoſi find their Pretence verified,

ed, and their Expectation anſwered in the Solution.

RASH is the Calumny propagated againſt the Author of the Problem, and great is the Weakneſs and Credulity of Men, who readily join in the Detraction to the Ruin of themſelves, and others. But it is ſomething worſe than Temerity, for Phyſicians to credit their own Scandal to the ruining of Men, and hurting their own Reputation. I muſt appeal to thoſe bold Detracters, if any Candour could lodge with ſo much Calumny, whether they have not often found their Sick expiring under the Operation of a *Purge*, and of a *Vomit*: But we muſt not expect that Men ſhould avow their Misfortunes. I ſhall only inſtance in one Example, that is too publick to be either conceal'd, or deny'd.

A CHILD of ſix Years old, the Daughter of a perſpicacious Miniſter, was in one Hour hurried from her Play into her Grave, by a vomiting Doſe of fifteen *Grains* of *Ipecacuana*, and ſix *Drams* of *Oxymel* of *Squills*. According to the *Tables*, the Child had double her Doſe, or the double of what a Perſon of her Age commonly takes: but, if ſhe was of the Conſtitution, that is more eaſily vomited, the Quantity given her was four times her Doſe; and if any preſent Indiſpoſition favoured the working of the Vomit, the Doſe ſtill exceeded on that account. Had not any Phyſician better con-

ſult

ſult the *Table of Doſes*, than to live in Terror, during the Operation of a Vomit, or that he ſhould charge *Nature*, or an *Apothecary*, with this Surprize on Nature, as ſome of the ſame Practiſers call ſmall Accidents of that kind, howſoever criminal.

I WOULD gladly know of the moſt credulous, what Injury is done to the World by rendering Medicines ſo much uſed, as *Purges* and *Vomits* are, ſafe, by determining their *juſt Doſes*; and upon ſo ſure a Foundation, that, at the ſame time, the Boundaries of *Experience*, and *Reaſoning* in Phyſick, clearly appear. Nor ſhould Phyſicians, eminent only by conſpiring againſt Mankind, complain of *Diſcoveries*, that might guard their falſe Fame from the common Obſervation of the World; and even Phyſick it ſelf, by their Miſmanagement, from an Imputation of its being precarious, uncertain, and void of all Principles of Knowledge.

But we may ſee how Men conſpire to their being abuſed by any Pretender, who will aſſume that Office, by the Arguments offered againſt the preſent Improvement. It is demonſtrated, on the *Solution*, that *Purging* and *Vomiting Medicines* operate in a Proportion to the *Quantity* of *Blood*, and the *Squares* of its *Fluidity*. The *Phyſick Hiſtorian* pretends to expoſe this Truth, by alledging that *Avenzoar* reprehends *Alchindus*,

chindus for affirming that a *Purge may be so exactly squared to the Constitution of the Patient, and the Nature of the Humour to be discharged*, and declares that *such Speculations contribute very little to form a Judgment about any right Method of Cure.* But this, like the former game about *Fallopius*, and the *Ointment* in the Book of the *Gonorrhœa*, is absolutely false; no such account being in *Alchindus*, or *Avenzoar.* Dr *Freind* assures us that *Averrhoes* thought *Avenzoar* a *glorious* and an *admirable* Person, the *Treasure* of all *Knowledge*, as well as the *Supreme* in *Physick* from *Galen*'s time down to his own. But this again is nothing else than Dr *Mead*'s vouching for an *Ointment* not to be found in *Fallopius.* Thus when the Proof of any Fact is wanting, he has recourse to living, or dead, Vouchers. The charging the Dead for supporting Falsities, is as scandalous in the Historian, as the Affirmation of a living Voucher to a Falsehood is ignominious to himself. After all; *Averrhoes* is not esteemed by Dr *Freind*, who assures us *that he was no great Practitioner, i. e.* not so great as himself: for on all Comparisons of this kind, through the History of Physick, he is always supreme.

WERE we to conclude any thing from this Manner of Reasoning, about humane Credulity; sure nothing is more liable to

be impoſed upon: for if Dr *Freind* (*who has ſtudied the Foibles of Human Nature, and can form a good Judgment, how far Mankind can be impoſed upon; and never failed to make his Advantage of their Credulity*, can impoſe upon the World with borrowed Titles and falſe Hiſtory; we muſt confeſs, that *Men* are more eaſily caught than *Mackerel*.

THERE ſeems to be nothing new in this manner of treating the moſt uſeful Phyſicians. *Hippocrates* complained of it; and *Democritus*, who had throughly conſidered Mankind, had not overlook'd the Fate of Phyſick; when he tells *Hippocrates*, that he ſuppoſed that moſt things in his *Art*, lay under publick *Calumny*, either through *Envy* or *Ingratitude*.

THUS far I have conſidered the Danger of improving Phyſick, as I have been led by the *Slander* in the *Hiſtory of Phyſick*; and the Defence made in the *Obſervations* on the Miſrepreſentations of the Hiſtory; and as I have fully made out the Danger, I might put an end to this Diſcourſe, but that I think this Argument will be more perfect, by purſuing one thing hinted in the *Obſervations, &c.* to ſome greater Length. For there will appear the greateſt *Envy* on one ſide, and the greateſt *Ingratitude* on the other, that Credulity itſelf ever did admit. Beſides, ſome incidental Account will be given

given of the preſent *Epidemical Fever*, not only agreeable, but what may be ſtill very uſeful at this time.

THE preſent *Fever*, with a Variation in ſome of its Symptoms, has now ſubſiſted twelve Years; not in *England* only, but all over *Europe*. Few, or no, Phyſicians ſuſpected the reigning and popular Diſeaſe to be a *Fever*; *Vapours*, a *Nervous* Diſeaſe, and ſuch general Appellations it had from ſundry Phyſicians. Others who diſcovered the Fever, knew it was the *Low* or *Slow* Fever firſt mentioned by *Hippocrates*, and in the beſt Books of Phyſick had a place among Fevers, thro' all ſucceeding Ages. The laſt were repreſented as ignorant, for calling the Diſtemper a *Fever*, and affixing to it the name *Low*, or *Slow*: a *Slow-Fever* being, in their Adverſaries opinion, altogether unheard of among Phyſicians, and never recorded in their Books. Nothing was thought more monſtrous than calling this Diſtemper a *Fever*, or confining Perſons afflicted with it to their Bed, and dieting them with Broth, or other liquid Food of good Nouriſhment, and what is eaſily concocted.

WE muſt not wonder that this Imputation lay heavy on the learned Phyſicians, among the Populace for ſeven Years; becauſe it was charged by Men of greater Character than Knowledge. We muſt only

wonder, that a Prejudice taken by easy Men, should still remain with them, after the slandering Physicians, have both admitted the *Slow-Fever* to have been constantly described in Books of Physick, and the *Diet* and *Management* of the Sick as the most proper, and best adapted to the Cure of the *Epidemical Fever*. The Calumny sticks, tho' the detracting Physicians have changed both their Opinions, and Practice. Physicians then are in a deplorable Condition, that are subject to obloquie, for at first finding out the Disease, and the best Method of curing it: but the more that Men, who join in the Defamation, never think themselves obliged to repair the Wounds and Injuries they have given. Good Sense should lead Men to consider the Change, and good Nature to make Satisfaction for the greatest Offence; that of Defamation.

Is any thing more obvious than that Physicians acknowledge themselves seven Years in an erroneous Practice; and the Bills of Mortality declare the Consequences of their Mistake: for in the Year 1723, two Years before the Change, the yearly Bill was 3347 higher than in the preceeding Year, tho' for some Years the Bills were rising every Year. I will not charge these Physicians with the Ballance of Mortality, nor with what has since happened in the

Course

Courſe of the *Epidemick Fever*, ſtill raging; but I muſt admire the Credulity of Men, who cannot diſcern where the Reprehenſion is due. They might have ſeen Phyſicians practiſing for a deſtroying Diſtemper; and yet, after ſeven Years, they confeſs themſelves ignorant of its very Name. What great Hazards, then, do Phyſicians run in their Fame, not only for clearing up a ſingle Difficulty in their Profeſſion; but even for diſcovering, at firſt Sight, a dangerous Diſeaſe, that may not only ſtill prove fatal by its Continuance; but by its being attended with more violent and mortal Symptoms.

THE Calumny againſt the *Low-Fever* was carried on, for the mentioned years of Ignorance, by the *Officers of the Cabal*; nor durſt they truſt it openly in the World; but, when the *Fever* was adopted into their Number of that kind, the Detraction muſt be continued againſt the Practice of the *Phyſician*, that had both diſcovered the dark and obſcure Sickneſs, and eſtabliſh'd the moſt proper Method of curing it. There were Reaſons for acknowledging the *Fever*, and others for keeping up the *Scandal* on the Practice againſt the Diſeaſe. I ſhall firſt relate the Objections made to the Practice, and, after conſidering them, give the Hiſtory how the *Slow-Fever* happened to be received by *thoſe very Men*, who had affirmed

firmed it a Diſtemper, never named by Phyſicians in former Times, and altogether unknown.

Dr *Freind* in the *Hiſtory of Phyſick*, ſpeaking of a hard or *ſchirrhous* Swelling, is pleaſed to compare it to a *Slow-Fever*; and tells us * that *too liberal a Uſe of* Diaphoreticks, *without proper Evacuations, renders the Blood more viſcous than it was before, and more liable to Stagnation*; and affirms, with an *Anathema*, that this *ill-judged and prepoſterous Method, not only gives no Relief to the original Complaints, but lays a Foundation for many Diſtempers, and perhaps of a worſe Kind, to ſucceed.* Here we find the firſt Receptation of the *Slow-Fever*; but *Hippocrates* tells us, that it is a very obſcure Diſtemper, which neither the Sick, nor any about him had obſerved, and what neither Dr *Freind*, nor any of his Concerts, had hitherto diſcover'd; we may fairly queſtion, how they became of a ſudden acquainted with the moſt proper Method of curing it. Men muſt be led by *Symptoms* firſt to find a Diſeaſe; after which, its *Nature*, and from this the Method of *Cure*; and as all theſe were unknown, we muſt conclude a Phyſician to have a good Aſſurance, who pretends to practiſe againſt

* *Pag.* 60. *Vol.* I.

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an *unknown Diſeaſe*, and far more to condemn the Practice of *thoſe*, who had diſcovered the *Fever*, and its *Nature*, ſeven Years before.

THE Charge itſelf ſupports what I now affirm; for in it there is neither common Senſe, nor a common Taſte in the plaineſt, and moſt obvious, Parts in Phyſick. If any Man is ever ſo partial to any Adminiſtration in the Cure of a Diſeaſe, he will readily agree that *too liberal an Uſe of it* is always improper; but then, if the Fault is in overdoſing *Diaphoreticks*, theſe Medicines in a *due Doſe* may be the moſt uſeful. In that Caſe, the Objection does not affect the Practice of the *Phyſician* whom they would affect by it, but rather confirms the Goodneſs of it.

In the next place, does the *Doctor* think that there is no *Evacuation* by *Diaphoreticks?* If he does, he plainly contradicts the plaineſt Experiments of the *Statical Phyſick*; for by that we are ſure (as ſure as *weighing* can inform us) that it is greater than all the other Evacuations taken together. Now as there is a *Diaphoretical Evacuation*, and this Evacuation, *not too liberal*; is proper; this Method is, on that Account, the moſt proper Method of curing a *ſlow Fever*, according to *Freind's* own way of Reaſoning. What he means by the Words, *without proper Evacuations*, is a

Noſtrum

Noſtrum he keeps with the greateſt Reſerve; but if he means *purging*, even with *Tinctura ſacra*, or *bleeding*; they have not only been excluded from the Practice of the *preſent Fever*; but have commonly proved fatal in the hands of thoſe, who have pertinaciouſly ſtuck to the Practice of them. The notable ill Succeſs of *theſe Methods* hath juſtly made them odious all over *England*.

THAT the *Blood* is render'd more *viſcous* by the Practice of *Diaphoreticks* is equally falſe by the *Statical Phyſick*, as that *Diaphoreticks* produced no *Evacuation*. As to the Charge, that Diaphoreticks lay a *Foundation for many Diſtempers, and perhaps of a worſe kind*, is altogether the *Quackery* of *raw-head* and *bloody Bones*; and is an Argument that can only take place, according to the Confidence which the credulous Sick repoſe in the Perſon who intends to frighten him with it; but what has no Foundation either in Reaſon, or Experience.

IT muſt be confeſs'd, that it is not eaſy for the greateſt Number of Phyſicians to practiſe accurately by *Diaphoreticks*; for though, in ſome ſenſe, there are not ſo many ways of erring in adminiſtring them, as in any other *Evacuation*; yet it is very hard to know when they are *not uſed libelyral enough*; never when their Uſe is *too liberal*; but we cannot reaſonably expect, that Men ſhould give Rules for *Diaphoreticks*,

who

who cannot govern the extream Doſes of *Purging*, *Vomiting*, and of *Bleeding*; if I may ſo call the *exceſſive ſhedding of Blood.* But let any Phyſician be on his guard, when, at any time, he gives laws to *Diaphoreticks*; which may prove the Ruin of his Reputation, and his utter undoing in the World.

It is not ſufficient, to have a general account of a *ſlow Fever*; but all *Fevers* appear with other Diſeaſes, and are often attended with Diſeaſes which have more conſpicuous and terrible Symptoms. Phyſicians ought to be able to diſtinguiſh between a *Fever*, and its *Symptoms*; more eſpecially when the Diſeaſe is very *obſcure*, as is the *Low-Fever*; which is attended with a greater Variety of ſtrange and terrible Symptoms, than any other *Fever* whatſoever; but which cannot receive any Relief, otherwiſe than by curing the *Fever* itſelf.

ABOUT the Autumnal Equinox (ſays Hippocrates) *the Son of* Eratolaus *was taken ill of a* Dyſentery *with a* Fever. *Neither the ſick Perſon, nor any about him, for the firſt ſix days obſerved this little* Fever; *it was ſo* low *and* obſcure. *Yet there was a great Pulſation of the* Temples, *or of the temporal Arteries; and the Tongue was white, and his Drought was moderate, and he without Sleep. Tho' the Caſe continued above forty days, yet his* Heart, *and his*

Tongue, *and his* Thirſt, *perſevered in the mentioned State, and he did not* ſweat.

In the preſent Caſe, we find the moſt conſtant Symptoms of a *Low-Fever* to this Day. I only wonder how this plain and accurate Deſcription was overlooked by Dr *Freind.* The Book of the *Plague* forbids us to expect any ſuch Diſcoveries from its *Author* : But what is more wonderful, that the common Rule, in the *ſeven Years* of general Ignorance, is altogether contrary to the current Senſe of Phyſicians in all Ages. *You are not Hot ; you are not Dry ; you are in good Temper ;* and, therefore, *you have no Fever,* was the common Language of the Town. But this differs from the preſent Caſe of young *Eratolaus,* and *Hippocratick* Phyſicians were condemned, by the Bold, in Ignorance.

I must next obſerve, that the *Obſcure Fever* was attended with a *Bloody-Flux :* This was *obvious,* while the *principal Diſeaſe* was not apprehended, 'till it fell under the Obſervation of *Hippocrates.* This Blindneſs render'd, doubtleſs, the Caſe more dangerous ; as it commonly does among our ſelves. It is certain, that there is not any one Diſeaſe, in Phyſick, which undergoes greater Variation than the *Slow-Fever.* If a Perſon has a conſuming *Ptyaliſm,* or *Spitting,* it may depend on the *obſcure Fever,* and withſtand all *Aſtringents,* the common

mon Resort for *Evacuations*; indeed the most regular Practice against a *Ptyalism*, if regard is not had to the *Fever*, is always ineffectual.

BUT here I must stop, in view of the Wrecks of great Physicians, and not proceed in the History of *Mistakes*, occasioned by the *Obscurity* of the Disease, and *Terrour* of its Symptoms; because this useful History may prove very dangerous to the Person who undertakes it; I shall rather briefly show, why the *Slow-Fever* was received, notwithstanding its *Nature*, and the *Method of Curing* it are still unknown.

WE have found that the Calumny, about a *Slow-Fever*, was chiefly propagated in a clandestine Manner, by the *lower Order of the Cabal*; for this Reason there was not any room left for a Defence; till Sir *Richard Blackmore*, in an open and fair Manner, fell foul of Dr *Freind*'s Comments on some Books of *Hippocrates's Epidemicks*, or *popular Diseases*. Had Sir *Richard* attack'd his Adversary with any Temper, and had he not thrown off all regard for the *Founder of our Faculty*, so just and highly esteemed by the best, and most learned, Physicians, from the time of that admirable Person, down to our own, he had neither exposed his own Knowledge, nor undergone the due Correction he suffered on that occasion.

AMONG other Proofs of his being a Stranger to the Writings of Phyſicians, eſpecially of the great *Hippocrates*, he falls into a more pardonable Error, about a *Slow-Fever*; for while he magnifies his own Obſervation about the *Fever*, Epidemick among ourſelves, he gives an imperfect Deſcription of a Diſeaſe he might have better learned from the *Phyſician*, whom he calumniates, and at the ſame time he might have been ſenſible that it was not *New*. For the Deſcription he gives of his *Hyſterick Fever*, ſo much reſembles a Commentator on the forementioned Hiſtory of *Hippocrates*, that it ſeems to be taken from him; tho' neither of them are equal to the Caſe of young *Eratolaus*.

THIS Defence of *Hippocrates*, and, by him, of Dr *Freind*'s uſeful Undertaking, was ſo pleaſing to the *Doctor*, that he forthwith took a *Slow-Fever*, into his number of *Fevers*. *Mead* followed him, and the multitude of Detractors. *Freind* was particularly delighted with *Riolam*'s Comment, which ſeemed to explain, and enlighten, the confuſed Notions they had about the *common* and *Epidemick Diſeaſe*; becauſe it better expreſſed the *Vapours*, *Nervous*, and *Hyſterick* Diſtempers, they had groſly conceived. *Hujuſmodi Febricula dignoſcenda potius ex languore, inappetentiâ, corporiſque Gravitate quam ex vehementia Symptomatum*;

tum; ita ut dicere possimus hujusmodi Ægrotos non sentire morbum nisi privativè, dum solitas Actiones non possunt facile obire.

Now as Physicians have both embraced a *Slow-Fever*, and forsaken their *Nostrums* of *proper Evacuations*; there is nothing left to desire, but that weak Men would forget the unfavourable Impressions made upon them by *vile Slanderers*, who have now become *Converts* to Opinions which they had before industriously loaded with Calumny. But Men, I fear, in *Scandal*, are what an *excellent Author* says of *Fashions* in some Churches; They *are always ready to receive every* new Mode, *without laying aside any of the* old.

By this Account it is manifest, that a *Physician, who improves his Profession* is sure to be loaded with all the Calumny which *ignorant Physicians* can devise, and Men seldom fail to entertain the plentiful Reproaches of the Detractors. There is likewise nothing new in this Treatment; which is as ancient as the Records of Physick themselves. It was the Complaint of the great *Hippocrates*: and *Democritus*, the wisest of Men, had observed this Foible of humane Nature. The *first* informs us; that *Physick*, the most excellent of all Arts, was become the most contemptible, through the *Unskilfulness* of Physicians, and the *Rudeness* of the People; who believe these ignorant Men to be Physicians.

ſicians. *Democritus*, indeed, had examin'd the intemperate Diſregard Men commonly have for Knowledge, and as harſhly obſerves upon their Dealings with *Phyſicians*, as he had done in other Particulars in human Life; and, in his Converſation with *Hippocrates*, thus expreſſes himſelf. *I very much ſuſpect, that many things in your Profeſſion fall under* publick Contumely, *either through* Envy, *or* Ingratitude; *for as ſoon as the Sick recover their Health, they aſcribe their Recovery either to the* Gods, *or to* Chance; *but a great many attributing it to their own* natural Conſtitution, *hate their Benefactor; and hardly forbear thinking themſelves very ill uſed for being under an Obligation for ſo good an Office.*

Dr *Lanciſi*'s Letter to Dr *Cockburn*, mentioned pag. 19.

E*Volvi opus à capite, ut aiunt, ad calcem, & quidem ſummâ cum voluptate; verſatur enim circa argumentum, ſi non omnino novum, novarum certè obſervationum, doctrinarum, ac remediorum acceſſione per Te locupletatum, utileque redditum; in quo præterea nec lucidus ordo, nec ſtylus elegans, quibus ſcripta noſtra lectoribus maximè commendantur, ullâ in parte deſideratur; ac proinde*

proinde non dubito, quin, quod tute in epistola nuncupatoria asseris, datis alterius cujuscunque morbi symptomatibus, ejusdem etiam naturam, iisdem planè modis, quibus Tu ad Gonorrhœam pervenisti, facilè erui, atque explicari in posterum possit. *Habeo itaque quod non tibi solum gratuler, sed etiam universæ Medicorum Reipublicæ, quippe quæ unico ex volumine omnia, vel de natura, ac sede hujus mali, vel de curatione utiliter hauriet. Sed judicium hujus Commentarii frustra ab aliis expetis, cum Tu magno ingenio, præclarâ eruditione, assiduoque usu donatus tum scribendis, tum exponendis libris Judex præ cæteris sedere possis.*

Accipe intereà specimen hoc cum benè auspicatæ nobiscum amicitiæ, tum candoris mei; & Rem Medicam doctissimis tuis laboribus locupletare perge. Vale.

Romæ, Idibus Januarii
M D CC XVII.

FINIS.